

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An electronic equipment having parts ~~which~~ that may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

a setting part ~~which~~ that is set with ~~a predetermined~~ the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

~~an authenticating part~~ a processor configured to authenticate a validity of ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and

a changing part configured to temporarily change the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in said setting part, in response to a change instruction, when said processor ~~authenticating part~~ authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

2. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said setting part is preset ~~[[wit]]~~ with a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

3. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said ~~authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the maintenance-attending person.

4. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said changing part adds a maintenance range specified by the change instruction only for a period of time specified by the change instruction, with respect to the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in said setting part.

5. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said setting part is also set with a predetermined management range in which management is permitted, and

said changing part also temporarily changes the predetermined management range set in said setting part, in response to the change instruction, when said ~~authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

6. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

an input part configured to permit input of the change instruction by an operator whose validity is authenticated.

7. (Currently Amended) An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment ~~which~~ that includes a setting part which is set with a ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, a first authenticating part to authenticate a validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part to temporarily change the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in the setting part in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

a ~~second-authenticating part~~ processor configured to authenticate a validity of an operator of the equipment managing apparatus;

an input part configured to permit input of the change instruction for changing the maintenance range when the ~~second-authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of

the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

a part configured to supply the change instruction input from said input part to the electronic equipment.

8. (Currently Amended) The equipment managing apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said ~~second authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the operator.

9. (Currently Amended) An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

a setting part configured to set in advance ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

a ~~first authenticating part~~ processor configured to authenticate a validity of ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

a changing part configured to temporarily change the set maintenance range to a ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said processor ~~first authenticating part~~, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.

10. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said setting part is provided within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, ~~or~~ or within a setup site of the equipment.

11. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said changing part is provided within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or[[,]] within a setup site of the equipment.

12. (Original) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, and
said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

13. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein
said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, or[[,]] provided within the equipment, and
said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

14. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:
a second authenticating part configured to authenticate a validity of an operator of said changing part.

15. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said second authenticating part authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the operator.

16. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said processor ~~first authenticating part~~ authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of a maintenance person.

17. (Original) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said setting part sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

18. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

a maintenance part configured to perform the maintenance of the equipment within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.

19. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein

said maintenance part is provided in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment.

20. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein

said maintenance part is provided within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or[[,]] within the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

21. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment.

22. (Currently Amended) An equipment maintenance method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising the ~~steps of:~~

(a) setting in advance ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

(b) authenticating a validity of ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

(c) ~~temporarily~~ changing temporarily the set maintenance range to a ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said step (b), so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.

23. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (a) is performed within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, ~~or~~ or within a setup site of the equipment.

24. (Currently Amended) The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (c) is carried out within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or[[,]] within a setup site of the equipment.

25. (Original) The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step (c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

26. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 24, wherein

said step (c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider or[[,]] ~~provided~~ within the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

27. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(d) authenticating a validity of an operator of said changing [[part]].

28. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 27, wherein said step (d) authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the operator.

29. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (b) authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using

an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of a maintenance person.

30. (Original) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (a) sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

31. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(e) carrying out maintenance of the equipment within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.

32. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said step (e) is carried out in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment.

33. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said step (e) is carried out within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or[[,]] within the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

34. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment.

35. (Currently Amended) An electronic equipment having parts ~~which~~ that may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

setting means ~~set with a predetermined~~ for storing the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

authenticating means for authenticating a validity of ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and

changing means for temporarily changing the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range ~~[[set]]~~ stored in said setting means, in response to a change instruction, when said authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

36. (Currently Amended) An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment which includes setting means ~~set with~~ for storing a ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, first authenticating means for authenticating a validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and changing means for temporarily changing the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range ~~[[set]]~~ stored in the setting ~~[[part]]~~ means in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

second authenticating means for authenticating a validity of an operator of the equipment managing apparatus;

input means for permitting input of the change instruction for temporarily changing the maintenance range when the second authenticating means authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

means for supplying the change instruction input from said input means to the electronic equipment.

37. (Currently Amended) An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

setting means for setting in advance ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

authenticating means for authenticating a validity of ~~[[a]]~~ the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

changing means for temporarily changing the set maintenance range to a changed ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating means, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range.

38. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium ~~which stores~~ including a program, for causing a ~~wherein the program, when executed by a computer,~~ causes the computer to set to perform a method for setting a maintenance range which that specifies parts of an electronic equipment ~~which that~~ that may be subjected to maintenance, said ~~program method~~ method comprising:

[[a]] ~~setting procedure causing the computer to be set with a predetermined~~ the
maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance-
attending person is permitted;

[[an]] ~~authenticating procedure causing the computer to authenticate a~~ validity of [[a]]
the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and

[[a]] ~~changing procedure causing the computer to temporarily change the~~
~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in said setting ~~procedure~~, in response to a change
instruction, when said authenticating ~~procedure~~ authenticates the validity of the
maintenance-attending person.

39. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium ~~which stores~~
including a program, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the for
~~causing a computer to manage~~ perform a method for managing an electronic equipment
~~which that~~ includes a setting part set with a ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range in which
maintenance is permitted, an authenticating part configured to authenticate a validity of a
maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part configured to
temporarily change the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in the setting part in response to
a change instruction when the authenticating part authenticates the validity of the
maintenance-attending person, said ~~program~~ method comprising:

[[an]] ~~authenticating procedure causing the computer to authenticate a~~ validity of an
operator of the computer;

~~an input procedure causing the computer to permit input of~~ inputting the change
instruction for temporarily changing the maintenance range when the authenticating
~~procedure~~ authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in

which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

~~a procedure causing the computer to supply~~ supplying the change instruction input by said ~~input procedure~~ inputting to the electronic equipment.

40. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium ~~which stores~~ including a program, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the for ~~causing a computer to control~~ perform a method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, said ~~program~~ method comprising:

[[a]] setting ~~procedure causing the computer to set~~ in advance [[a]] the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

[[an]] authenticating ~~procedure causing the computer to authenticate~~ a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

[[a]] changing ~~procedure causing the computer to~~ temporarily ~~change~~ the set maintenance range to a ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating ~~procedure~~, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.